



The Heron

*Newsletter of Clinton County Conservation
Volume 37 Number 1 March - April 2015*

Budget Cuts: Doing Less With Less

by Walt Wickham, Executive Director

One of the toughest parts of being the Executive Director of the Conservation Board is dealing with budgets. The vast majority of our day-to-day operating funds come from tax dollars that are allocated to the department by the County Board of Supervisors. Like most of us, the Conservation Board must live within a budget. We can't spend more money than what is allocated to the department. Some years the budget is larger; others it's smaller.

Each year, it is my duty to prepare a budget request to present to the Board of Supervisors. The request is based on what the Conservation Board, staff and I see as reasonable and necessary to protect and maintain the parks and natural areas within our care and to provide a level of services of outdoor recreation and environmental education that the public expects of us. We are very cognizant of the fact that we are spending the tax payers' dollars. Because of this we try to be as effective and efficient as possible. We try to bring in outside sources of funding such as grants and donations whenever possible to help fill the gaps. While we don't always receive all of the dollars that are requested in the budget proposal, in the long haul, we receive enough funding to accomplish most of our goals. The funding level that is entrusted to the Conservation Department is ultimately based on what the Board of Supervisors feel is reasonable to accomplish our mission and falls within the County's budgetary constraints.

This year, a budget proposal was approved by the Conservation Board that included funds to replace two vehicles, build a new picnic shelter, bring playgrounds into ADA compliance and most importantly to us, add an additional Park Ranger position. Over the years, the work load in the West District (everything west of Highway 61) has increased tremendously while staffing has remained the same. New equipment and park upgrades are great, but people are what gets the work done. This proposal was then presented to the Board of Supervisors for consideration.

Not long after the budget presentation to the Board of Supervisors, I received a phone call asking me to meet with the Supervisors again to answer some questions and discuss the budget proposal in more detail. This is when the bomb dropped. At this meeting I was told that there were going to have to be deep cuts made to our budget. It seems that the county had a \$2.2 million dollar shortfall in the pool of money that the conservation department is funded from (the general basic fund). The conservation budget will be rolled back to 2012 levels. We were now faced with the

reality of not only receiving none of the increases we had requested, but it would now be necessary to cut nearly \$67,000 from our current budget level.



So what does this mean? Simply put, services will have to be cut and fees will need to be increased to help cover shortfalls in funding. While nothing is "carved in stone" yet and final budget decisions are yet to be made, the following scenario is likely. For starters, all new equipment purchases have been eliminated. Any planned park development will not occur. No new picnic shelters or improvements to playgrounds. Roof repairs and other major maintenance projects will be put on hold. Conference attendance and training expenses for staff will be eliminated with the exception of mandatory training for our law enforcement staff (Park Officers). A deep cut to our fuel budget will likely eliminate Blue Heron Eco Cruises with the exception of school groups. Public cruises could be a thing of the past. Some of our seasonal park maintenance positions will be scaled back to fewer weeks of employment or possibly eliminated. Our environmental education budget will be cut by one third. The environmental education budget include things like program supplies and this newsletter. It will be necessary to reduce the newsletter from six issues per year to four. It will also be reduced to a maximum of eight pages.

On the flip side of the budgetary coin is revenue. We are now looking into increasing camping fees, boat rental fees and fees for public programs such as canoe outings. Reduced hours of operation at some of our facilities such as the Eco Center at Rock Creek may also be necessary. There are no sacred cows when it comes to making cuts or increasing fees. Everything we do is being re-evaluated and is up for consideration at this time.

We will still do our best to maintain our parks, campgrounds and other public areas. We will still provide environmental education programming for school age children. Public education programs will be reduced in number or possibly include new or increased user fees.

We have always worked to get the most bang from every buck we have, but at some point, you just can't do more with less. You do less with less. This is the reality of county conservation funding. Dollars to carry out our programs and operate our parks are never guaranteed. Let's just hope things improve sooner instead of later.

Eden Valley Nature Center Makeover

by Mark Roberts, Education Coordinator

We are amidst a winter of change. Ironically, while we are subjected to significant budget cuts, we are also making great forward strides in our nature displays. The Nature Gallery in the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center, Rock Creek, is getting some fantastic, long-awaited additions. We will get to those later. For now, I want to focus on our oldest Nature Center at Eden Valley Refuge.

Since I started back in 1992, the center has gone through several transformations. The staff of our West District deserve a lot of credit, especially when it comes to any construction, such as a new roof, walls or ceiling, as have been accomplished in the past. Park Officer Chip Brown has sent in the storm troopers (maintenance workers, Dave Schneden and Allen Ketelsen) to help out with the latest remodel. I also give great credit to our education staff when it comes to much of the display work that makes the center such an interesting place to visit. Chuck Jacobsen, Jill Schmidt, Jessica Steines and myself have spent many hours at the center upgrading the visitor experience in the last month.

The current work this winter was triggered by an innocent message I spotted on the Iowa Association Naturalist's Listserve. It was from the Naturalist from Wapello County Conservation Board offering a whitetail deer display to other CCB's. The display had been in their Nature Center, near Ottumwa, for over fifteen years and needed a new home. They wanted to create a display about the Trumpeter Swan Restoration Project and needed the space as well as some funding. I saw the pictures and immediately thought that the display would fit in well at Eden Valley as a display.

The two deer in the display died in battle when their antlers locked and they could not separate. The two bucks are preserved in death, as in life, locked in mortal combat, forever, as they fight for dominance of the forest. This scenario is played out in the Eden Valley woods every year, though, usually, not to the death. The scene is set during the fall "rut" when hormones in male deer rage and drive them to fight for breeding rights.

The first thing I had to do was to survey other staff too see if they thought it was a good idea, then to find out if we could even fit it inside the building. The display is fairly massive, it is enclosed in an oak and glass case, measuring 12.5'L x 6.5'W x 6'H. I met with Chip and Dave at the nature center and started thinking about where to put it. It was decided that the "Fossil" wall would have to be moved and the honey bee display relocated. We also would need to disassemble the display at Wapello and transport/reassemble at Eden Valley without breaking any glass. Beckwith Roofing loaned us an enclosed trailer and the Eden Valley boys, Bob Schaefer and I made the long haul to Ottumwa to load up the display, trucked it to Eden Valley to unload, then back to Grand Mound. Mission accomplished so far, as we did not even scratch the wood, let alone crack the glass.

In order to move the display, it had to be disassembled and



partially demolished. Chuck and I are busy fixing up the display. At first I was a little upset, since more work would be involved to get the deer ready for viewing but, it does give us the chance to put in some little extras. We are adding a few touches, including a deer scrape, tracks, and some other interesting tidbits to go along with the deer rub already in the display. We are also sculpting a new ground surface made from Styrofoam, cloth, paint and glue.

Since we already had to move a wall and repaint a section of the center, we decided to go ahead and repaint all the interior walls. I never knew how badly it needed it until we took everything off the walls to prepare. Once everything was off the walls, it was decided to make changes to what we have on display. The guys also turned the geode display case into a cool new snake cage for our black rat snake. We have all had projects around the home that led to a bigger project than originally planned. The project snowballed on us, but I think folks will agree, the Nature Center will end up with a whole new look and be the better for it..

We open for the season on April 18th. The Center is open, free of charge, to the public on Saturday afternoons from 1-4 PM into October and by appointment for youth groups. I hope you get a chance to stop by, better yet, camp at Eden Valley and take in all the park has to offer. It is still the off season at Rock Creek, but the Center there is open 8-4, Thursday through Sunday. Swing by and check out our progress there as well.



Camping Hacks for the 2015 Season

Jill Schmidt, Interpretive Naturalist

With camping season right around the corner it's time to start thinking of ways to better your experiences. Whether you are a novice camper or one who spends every weekend at your favorite campground, camping hacks can help you create a more relaxing and enjoyable camping experience. After all, aren't you trying to limit the work while you are out camping? Here are some DIY camping hacks that might help you glide through camping season!

My kids always seem to be in need of a light when camping. Flashlights are handy when needing to travel outside at night, but when you are in a tent and would like a light source that lights up the whole room, a milk jug light is a great trick. It is a safe light source for your younger campers. Just take a milk jug, fill it with water, and attach a head lamp to it, light side in. The light magnifies through the water in the jug creating a child friendly light source that lights a large area.



Milk jug lantern.

Fire starters, there are many creative and fun ways to make your own fire starters. Many people spend big money on the fancy fire starting blocks you can buy at the store. Although those work very well, they are costly. You can start right now, making your own fire starters and have



enough prepared for your camping season. A very simple way of making a fire starter is taking a cotton pad (often used for make-up removal or first aid) and dip them in wax and let dry. This type of fire starter only requires the two materials and is easy to do. Another fire starter that you can make requires a



Top: Cotton pad and wax fire starters.

Bottom: Lint and wax fire starters in an egg carton.

cardboard egg carton, dryer lint, and wax. You will pack the egg carton full of dryer lint. This requires a lot so start collecting now! Once the carton is full then you can melt some wax, either old candles, crayons, or you can purchase wax blocks at the store. I am a Scentsy user, so when my wax has lost its smell I just pour it into my egg carton. Once every "egg" has been covered by wax you can either cut them into individual fire starters or what I do, is just tear one off the egg carton when I need it. That way it stores itself and I need nothing to put them in.



Wilderness toilet tissue holder. Enough said!

With camping comes bugs, and the most famous villain of them all is the mosquito. An easy solution to this annoying insect is to burn sage in your fire. By wrapping the sage around a stick, you are able to spread the smoke around your campsite easier. Otherwise just put it directly in your campfire. The smell in the smoke keeps



Sage mosquito smoker.

the mosquitoes at bay and you are set with a more pleasant campsite. Of course Raid and other bug repellants do the job, but this natural herb is safe if inhaled and carries a pleasant odor.

Hand washing always seems like an issue while camping. Having to find the nearest water source every time you need to wash your hands can be a problem. Create an easy hand washing station using an old, washed-out, laundry detergent container. This easy to use spout makes hand washing convenient and easy to do right at your campsite.

This camping season try your hand at some of these creative camping hacks. You may find yourself working less and enjoying more of your camping weekend.



Laundry jug hand wash. P.3

Events Calendar - Free Family Fun in the Outdoors!

March

7th ~ Wild Turkey Federation Banquet ~ 6 PM ~ Millennium Ballroom, Goose Lake ~ Help raise funds for turkey habitat and public hunting. Call Mike House at 563-357-9251 for tickets.

7th & 8th ~ Free Snowshoe Weekend ~ 8 AM-2 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Please call the Eco Center at 563-259-1876 to check on snow conditions.

12th ~ A Nature Story ~ 10 AM ~ Rock Creek ~ Preschoolers and their parents can enjoy a free nature-related story followed by a themed craft or nature activity.

15th ~ Youth Hunter Education Challenge - Open Try-outs ~ 1 PM ~ Wapsi Valley Izaak Walton League, DeWitt ~ Y.H.E.C. is a weekend-long event that takes place each June. Youth compete in 8 events, learn about the outdoors and have fun with other young people that have similar interests. The events include four shooting events (archery, muzzleloader, shotgun and small-bore rifle) and four non-shooting events (wildlife id, orienteering, hunter safety trail and a written exam).

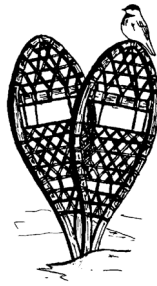
17th ~ Fishing Has No Boundaries Meeting ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Fishing Has No Boundaries is a national, non-profit organization that provides opportunities for disabled people to go fishing. This is an informational meeting on The Eastern Iowa Chapter who will be hosting its second annual fishing event at Rock Creek on June 6th. If you have any questions regarding the event please call Naturalist, Jill Schmidt at 563-349-8680.

20th & 21st ~ It's Spring!!! Weekend ~ Rock Creek ~ Spring officially begins this weekend so celebrate with some camping. All our cabins are heated. Cabin rentals are discounted online this weekend only at www.mycountyparks.com.

21st ~ Riverside Jam ~ 2 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Come enjoy an afternoon of home spun music at the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center. Area musicians and vocalists are invited to bring their instruments and talents to blend as others gather to listen, sing along and sometimes dance. It is truly enjoyable for all.

21st ~ Camanche Ducks Unlimited Dinner ~ 5 PM ~ Imperial Lanes, Camanche ~ Contact Ruth Marsh 563-212-8133 for tickets.

24th ~ Friends of Rock Creek ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ The Friends are a group of citizens dedicated to improving the park and its facilities for visitors with the promotion of the site through volunteering and planning events. New members and guests welcome!



28th ~ Beginner Paddling Workshop ~ 9 AM-1 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ We'll cover the basics of safe paddling including planning your trip, finding the right gear, demonstrating different boats, loading boats for shuttling, paddle strokes, launching and landing and rescue technics. This will be a land based event with option of trying out techniques on the water in front of the center. Throughout the paddling season we will offer trips, including overnight options, that will cover the entire shoreline of Clinton County. This workshop is free but the trips will have a \$20/day/boat registration fee, but a money saving package deal will be offered to workshop participants. Call to register at 563-847-7202 by March 18th.



28th ~ 20th Annual Spring Pheasant Festival ~ 5 PM ~ Wheatland Community Center ~ Clinton County Pheasants Forever is planning a night of fun & fundraising. Tickets are just \$15. Call Brad Taylor at 563-357-0465 for tickets.



31st ~ Arm Knitting ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Have you ever wanted to make your own infinity scarf? Come learn a fun and easy way to make a knitted scarf by using your arms. Once you get the hang of it you can complete it in 30 minutes. No knitting experience needed! Cost is \$20. There will be several yarn colors to choose from. If you prefer to purchase your own, please get 3 skeins of bulky or super bulky yarn. Please register by calling 563-847-7202.

April

2nd ~ Music in the Loft ~ 7 PM ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center ~ Come enjoy an evening of home spun music in the loft of the center's 1938 barn.

3rd & 4th ~ Winter Camping ~ Rock Creek & Eden Valley ~ This will be the last weekend for winter camping rates (\$5 discount) at Rock Creek and Eden Valley Refuge. Come out and take advantage of these low rates.



14th ~ Fishing Has No Boundaries Meeting ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ This is an informational meeting on The Eastern Iowa Chapter who will be hosting its second annual fishing event at Rock Creek on June 6th. If you have any questions regarding the event please call Naturalist, Jill Schmidt at 563-349-8680.

14th ~ Woodcock Watch ~ 7:30 PM ~ Sherman Park ~ Some of the most memorable and anxiously awaited sights and sounds of spring are those demonstrated by these seldom heard and seen birds. You can sit by a warm fire after a short presentation and watch their sky dance while listening for their calls. Or get up on your feet and attempt a close encounter of the weirdest kind. The terrain can be rough, the reward is entertaining.



16th ~ Lions, Bobcats and Bears! Oh My! ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Once upon a time naturalist Jessica completed her internship in Arkansas at Turpentine Creek, a refuge for abused, neglected, abandoned big cats (mountain lions, tigers, African lions, etc.), and she wants to share her experiences with working with large predators. Also, she will touch on the status of large predators that have been spotted throughout the state of Iowa.



18th ~ Pancake Breakfast ~ 8-11 AM ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center ~ Enjoy a fresh, hot breakfast and the company of citizens who care about outdoor education and recreation in the Gateway Area. There is no charge but donations are gratefully welcomed.

18th ~ Clinton County Shores Trip #1 ~ Lost Lakes Water Trail ~ 10 AM ~ Rock Creek ~ Meet at the Eco Tourism Center to load water craft, then shuttle to the put in below the US 67 bridge over Rock Creek. We'll paddle into the backwaters of the Mississippi and the National Wildlife Refuge. There may be portages involved. There is a \$20/day/boat fee for participation but a package deal will be offered at the March Paddling Workshop. Call 563-847-7202 and register today and we will send you a map and float plan.

18th ~ Riverside Jam ~ 2 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Come enjoy an afternoon of home spun music at the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center. Area musicians and vocalists are invited to bring their instruments and talents to blend as others gather to listen, sing along and sometimes dance. It is truly enjoyable for all.

22nd ~ Box Turtle Round-up ~ 9 AM ~ Thomson Sand Prairie ~ We are going to get a group of people together to walk the prairie, on a grid, looking for new turtles to put tracking devices on to help the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service increase this species population at the site. Call 563-847-7202 to sign-up. Meet at Schafer's Fish Market, north of Fulton, IL. Wear long pants and sturdy shoes, cactus is abundant!



25th ~ Spring Fling ~ 10 AM—2 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Spend the day celebrating Spring! At **10 AM** ~ there will be a **FREE** egg hunt for ages 1-12 by the back playground, At **11 AM** ~ Join US Fish & Wildlife Service's Jeramie Strickland as he shares his personal experiences with Ornate Box Turtles. You will get a chance to meet some of these threatened species up close and learn of ways you can help with his research!

At **12:30 PM** ~ check out some camping hacks in the Eco Center and make your own fire starters to take on your next camping adventure. There will also be crafts, live animals, and other family friendly things to do at the Eco Center!

Spring Is Here



25th ~ Eden Valley Nature Center Season Opener ~ 1-4 PM ~ Eden Valley ~ We will have cookies and lemonade for guests on this special day. A naturalist guided flower walk will start at 1:30 PM to see what is in early bloom and to appreciate the beauty of the spring woods. The Nature Center will be open from 1-4 PM on Saturdays, now through October.

28th ~ Friends of Rock Creek ~ 6 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ The Friends are a group of citizens dedicated to improving the park and its facilities for visitors with the promotion of the site through volunteering and planning events. New members and guests welcome!

28th & May 2nd ~ Hunter Education Course ~ 7-9:30 PM (Tue.) & 8 AM-4 PM (Sat.) ~ Wapsi Valley Ikes, DeWitt ~ Visit www.iowadnr.gov/training for required sign-up.



May 2nd ~ Eden Valley Nature Center Open ~ 1-4 PM

7th ~ Music in the Loft ~ 7 PM ~ Soaring Eagle Nature Center ~ Come enjoy an evening of home spun music in the loft of the center's 1938 barn.

9th ~ Eden Valley Nature Center Open ~ 1-4 PM

16th ~ Eden Valley Nature Center Open ~ 1-4 PM

16th ~ 2 PM ~ Riverside Jam ~ 2 PM ~ Rock Creek ~ Come enjoy an afternoon of home spun music at the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center. Area musicians and vocalists are invited to bring their instruments and talents to blend as others gather to listen, sing along and sometimes dance. It is truly enjoyable for all.

On The Horizon... Summer Camps!

All of our day camps run from 9:30 AM to 2:30 PM at Rock Creek. Cost is \$45 for all three days.

June 9th-11th ~ Creature Camp for K-2nd graders

June 16th-18th ~ Creature Camp for K-2nd graders

June 23rd-25th ~ Child vs. Wild Camp, for 3rd-5th graders

July 7th-9th ~ Child vs. Wild Camp, for 3rd-5th graders

July 21st-23rd ~ Kanoe Kids Camp for Middle Schoolers

Confessions of a Beginner Deer Hunter

by Jessica Steines, Interpretive Naturalist

I didn't get my hunter safety certification until I was in my mid-twenties, I am now in my thirties! I got it for a resume booster, a new challenge/skill. I was inspired by a female friend that I admire, one reason is that she is a hunter.

At hunter safety, I had a blast, but shotgun did not go well. Afterwards, I practiced. I was not good at all! Wondering if I was switching eye dominance, we tried many things. I wonder how many shotgun shells and clays I wasted that day. I felt defeated. A couple of years later, I was at the Wapsi River Center after a field trip with Clinton High School where the students are given an opportunity to shoot clays. Before cleaning up, we decided to have some fun and shot a few. I hit every clay thrown! I now had the confidence that I could hit and kill something.

I finally decided I would try deer season for the first time in 2011 with my husband, Tait, who has hunted for most of his life. Being a little timid of heights and having a loaded firearm I decided against the tree stands and picked a ground blind. I didn't get anything, but it was a good lesson on what to do and expectations. The next year Tait and I went out again and on the last day at the last possible moment we spotted a deer on the hillside about 170 yards away. I knew it was a long shot but I stood up, rested alongside of the big black oak tree and took aim. I was so nervous. Should I take such a risky shot? I would feel bad if I just injured it; what if I don't shoot at all? I thought of the time I sacrificed being away from my kids and my mother-in-law's sacrificed time watching them all weekend long. I figured I better shoot for fear of regret. My husband was my backup as he had a bead on it too, to ease my anxiety of injuring the animal. So I took off the safety, aimed my gun to what I thought it needed to be for the distance, took a breath in, exhaled half way, and Tait counting down from three and at the same time we shot. It fell instantly to the ground. Success!

The next year, I hunted both with Tait and by myself. I had the opportunity to shoot a deer and I did, though it surprised me. I have gotten over my fear of being in a tree stand. I had just got into the stand, shells in my hand ready to reload my shotgun. Then, over the hill popped out two

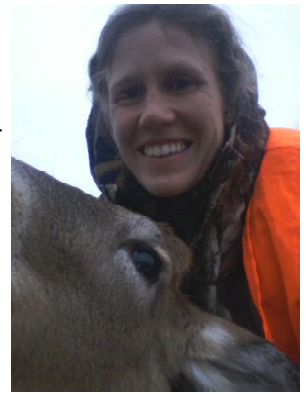
her chest. I hit her, she and the other deer ran. I waited for a bit, excited I hit her but nervous because she ran away. I tracked her for a long time, I even went back the next day, it was a good blood trail but I couldn't find her, I felt bad and disappointed. Lesson one, do not shoot into the chest, too much bone, not a sure thing.

Now to this last shotgun season.

This year I hunted mainly by myself. I am sitting in this tree stand that feels like you have to be a gymnast just to get up to it. After awhile a herd of five deer are speeding through the brush towards me being spooked from the neighboring hunters. I didn't have time to set up or anything, but for some reason the deer stopped right by me. I choose a doe and I shoot. I miss. It stands there trying to figure out where the sound is coming from. I shoot again. Miss! The herd runs away but she runs a bit in the opposite direction but stops. I shoot at her a couple more times coming up with nothing, though I see a fresh scar on a tree. I can't believe it. She gave me so many opportunities and I couldn't get the job done. Unbelievable....

I went out again, this time I chose the ground, tucked into a cedar tree. A couple of deer jumped over the fence. By the way, it is amazing how silently they move. Anyway, they are only 50 yards away, I aim, I shoot, I miss! My husband trying to redirect my disappointment, he always says to me, "at least you're seeing deer." "True," I say but I am still annoyed and now I am really mad. I decide to devote some time to practicing the next morning. At target practice, I am frustrated by my inconsistency. I call Tait. He listens then suggests that I practice shooting without ammunition with the safety off. Lo and behold, I was anticipating the shot and lunging forward to compensate for the kick. So I practice some more, satisfied but doubt still floats in my head. I grab some lunch and as I am about to get bundled up, I see two deer, a hundred yards from my house. So I run to grab some ammunition in our cabinet as I have used all that I had out for target practice that morning. I sneak around the house, army crawl through the yard, till I feel I can get no closer. So in a prone position I wait until the one deer steps away from the other. I shoot and miss! What! I let them run away, I stomp back to my target area and I shoot, I go to the target. Confused at what I am seeing, I unload my gun...in my haste, I had the wrong shells!

Being the determined person I am, I go out again. I am up in a tree stand and I hear some shots in the distance. A deer runs by, not a chance. But I think, one may come up slower so be ready. Here she comes, carefully walking through the brush. She is only 30 yards away. A larger tree is blocking her from seeing me so I turn off my safety. Click. She bolts across the way and stamps her hoof. I aim but it isn't a sure thing so I let her go, kicking myself for not holding both sides of the safety. Another lesson learned. This was my last shot at first season. I was beyond disappointed.



It's not easy to take a selfie with a deer.



A family affair. The excitement of mom getting a deer eases some of the guilt for taking time for herself.

does. Startled, I thought quickly, what should I do? I am already two days or so into hunting and they are right there. So I decided to put in one shell and make it count. She turned to me and instead of aiming into her vitals behind her shoulder, I shot into the front of

Continued from page 2. Tait, knowing that it was bothering me looked into a landowners tag. I got one, so it meant I could go onto our chunk of land for the second deer season. So I went out after work one day, my eighth day hunting, determined. I got set up. I even cut sticks into a Y to steady the heavy 12 gauge so I could set up a good shot. Less than a half an hour a couple of deer jumped the fence. They were so close, about 20 yards. I think to myself, if I miss this I may quit hunting forever! Luckily, I didn't miss. It crumpled in a heap, dying instantly. I was elated! I have done and accomplished great things in my life that I am very proud of, funny how harvesting a simple button buck that was not even my first deer, ranks high on my accomplishment list, but after all the mistakes and disappointment, it is.

I wondered as I was writing this. Do I want people to know how terrible of a hunter I am? The answer is no. But if I

can inspire someone to try it and not be afraid to make mistakes, so be it. During supper and drinks, I confessed all my embarrassing mistakes to my good friend and fellow hunter. She reassured me as I am to you we all make mistakes and they are worth it if you learn from them.

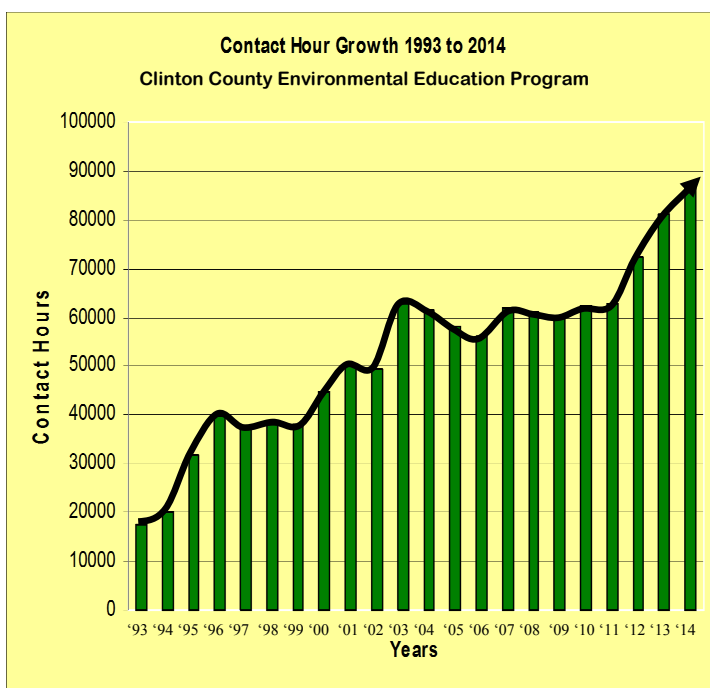
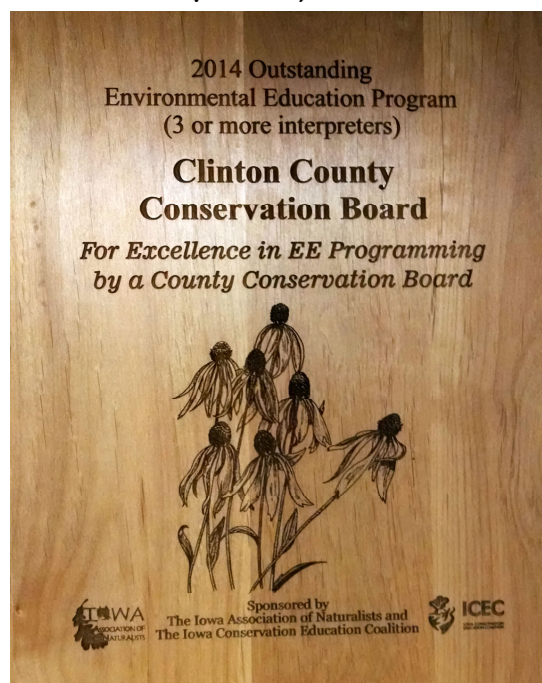


From the Iowa Association of Naturalists Newsletter, "The Web"

2014 ICEC/IAN Conservation & Environmental Education Awards Outstanding County Conservation Board EE Program (3 or more Interpreters)

Awarded to: Clinton County Conservation Board

The Clinton County Conservation Board has been and continues to be a pioneer and a leader in interpretation in the State of Iowa. Over the course of 2014 their staff delivered 2,686 programs to over 65,000 participants- FYI that is more people than actually live in Clinton County. Along with their programs, the staff maintains four interpretive sites including the "Blue Heron," an outdoor classroom solidly situated on a pontoon boat. Their new facility, the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center, has been well received and has hosted over 100 programs and dozens of fish/turtles. All in all, Clinton County Conservation continues to lead the charge in outstanding EE programming and what is possible if you just put your mind to it. Congratulations Clinton CCB! This is the fifth time since 1999 the Clinton CCB has been recognized with this award.



A photograph showing the interior of the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center. The room is large with high ceilings, large windows, and several round tables set up for a gathering.

Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center

Let us help you with your next gathering!
Wedding receptions, graduations, family reunions or a birthday party we are here to help.

Community Hall Rental

- *Rental Hours: 7 am-10 pm
- *Seating for up to 200
- *Use your favorite caterer or self-cater
- *\$250 per day or \$50 per hr. + \$100 deposit
- *Tables, Chairs, and AV equip. included

**3942 291st St. Camanche, IA
563-259-1876**

A logo for the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center. It features a circular emblem with a bird (likely a heron) in flight over water. The text "MISSISSIPPI RIVER" is arched above the emblem, and "ECO TOURISM CENTER" is written below it.

Clinton County Conservation
P.O. Box 68
Grand Mound, Iowa 52751
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Email: conservation@clintoncounty-ia.gov
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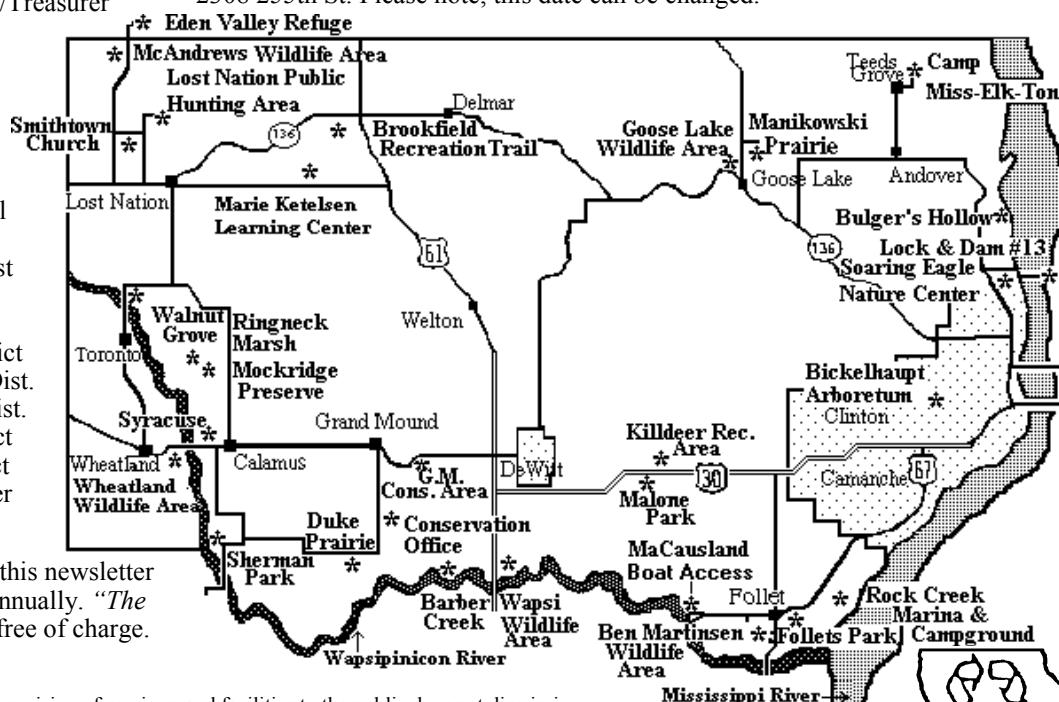
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Jessica Steines, Interpretive Naturalist
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Dave Schneden, Maintenance, West Dist.
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Brad Taylor, Park Officer, East District
Ryan Waltz, Park Ranger, East District
Michelle Stearns, Camp Store Manager

MAILING LIST

Clinton County addresses can receive this newsletter at home, free. Others are charged \$5 annually. "The Heron" is on our website or emailed, free of charge.

BOARD MEETINGS

The Clinton County Conservation Board meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcome. The Board meets the second Tuesday the month, at 6 PM, in the Conservation Office, located 1 mile south of Grand Mound at 2308 255th St. Please note, this date can be changed.



The Clinton County Conservation Board in the provision of services and facilities to the public does not discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, color, sex, creed, national origin, age or handicap. If anyone believes he or she has been subject to such discrimination, he or she may file a complaint alleging discrimination with either the Clinton C.C.B. or the Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Dept. of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.



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